

A Malay Pantheist Charm.

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According to the Shi'ites Ali, the *baginda 'Ali* of Malay charms, was the repository of Islamic mystical knowledge. And there is a story how a great prince, who had been defeated by a mightier, asked him: "Teach me the charms which the Apostle of God taught you." It is certain that this was a request which the first Malay converts to Islam were always making to the early Indian missionaries. And the charms the missionaries taught them were held to be esoteric, like the *mantra* of the Brahmins and the secrets of Sufism. The Shi'ite heresies and the pantheism, orthodox and heterodox, to be detected in many Malay charms await closer study at any rate by English scholars. "The utterances put into the mouths of the eight or nine principal saints of Java betoken a rash mystic pantheism," says Snouck Hurgronje. "This same heretical mysticism found some opponents and many strong supporters in Acheen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The book of the "Perfect Man," al-Jili's *Insanul-Kamil*, was much studied in early days in Java and left its mark on the bizarre contents of numerous native tracts. Allah is the one, indivisible Being, exalted above time and space. Multiplicity is appearance. Only God exists." A full description of al-Jili's book can be read in Nicholson's "Studies in Islamic Mysticism" (Cambridge, 1921) or in Shaikh Muhammad Iqbal's "The Development of Metaphysics in Persia" (London, 1908). "Such mysticism" continues Snouck Hurgronje, "is found also in Arabian lands but only in small circles of the initiated, as half secret doctrines of the Sufis, cautiously concealed on account of the hunt of official theologians for heresy and of the suspicious fanaticism of the vulgar. In the East Indies, however, it formed woof and warp not only of learned speculation but of popular belief. Tracts with drawings and tables were used in the endeavour to realize the idea of the Absolute. The four elements, the four winds, the four righteous Khalifs, the four founders of the schools of law, the four sorts of attributes of God in dogma, the four grades of progress in mysticism, the four extremities of the human body and many other sets of four were for popular mysticism revelations of the one indivisible self of man; through the names of Muhammad and Allah, each in Arabic spelt with four letters, were symbolized the One Being. 'Who knows himself, knows his Lord and he who knows his Lord has knowledge of himself,' said these mystics." ("Arabie en Oost-Indie," Leiden, 1907). A *pawang*'s charm to call back to memory the medium in Kelantan's *main puteri*, for example, invokes

'Balang Abubakar, 'balang Umar,
 'Balang Uthman, 'balang Ali!
 Jaga sa-kali!
 Angin shari'at, roma dëngan kulit!
 Angin 'itikad, daging dëngan darah!
 Angin tarikat, urat dëngan tulang!
 Angin ma'rifat, nyawa dëngan bëneh!
 Angin èmpat di-dalam, èmpat di-luar,
 Èmpat di-kanan, èmpat di-kiri,
 Èmpat di-bawah, èmpat di-atas,
 Jaga këluar
 Di-pintu sir, pintu 'itikad, pintu chinta, pintu rasa.

Dr. Gimlette has collected and is printing the full charm in a new edition of his "Malay Poisons." I quote the extract to illustrate the *pawang's* use of the mystic four.

Snouck Hurgronje's book on "The Achehnese," D. A. Rinkes' "Abdoerraoef van Singkel" (Friesland, 1909), B. J. O. Schrieké's "Het Boek van Bonang" and H. Kraemer's "Een Javaansche primbon uit de zestiende eeuw" (Leiden, 1921) should all be in the hands of the student of Malayan pantheism.

The Malay magician has a strange pedigree: first, animist, then Hindu and lastly, as Sufi mystic, the unconscious inheritor of Gnostic and Neo-Platonic doctrines. Brahminical *mantra*, to which even the Gods are subject, perhaps prepared his mind for the audacities of the Sufi. I will take one instance from Skeat's "Malay Magic" (pp. 587-588):—

*"Jibrail, Mikail, Israfil, 'Azrail;
 Ye are four but with me five!
 I sit on the seat of God!
 I lean against the pillar of God's throne."*

Is this a misconception or wilful corruption of al-Jili's description of the Perfect Man:—"he furnishes from himself an antitype to everything in existence—his heart stands over against the Pen, his soul over against the Guarded Tablet, his nature over against the elements. He stands over against the angels with his good thoughts." Another of Skeat's *pawang* (p. 581) speaks of "a white learned Shaikh who leans against the pillar of the Throne, who knows the Guarded Tablet, who writes down the Creed," (and, I suppose, of Muhammad in the phrase "the Sovereign Jewel who dwells above the Throne, controlling all the children of Adam.")

In this paper I translate a charm obtained in an East coast State of the Malay Peninsula: a promise to its possessor forbids me to divulge its home exactly. It was copied by me from a begrimed book probably a century old and transcribed according to the colophon from a still older manuscript:—

"A chapter to explain the charm called the Fortress of the Unity of God, practised by Maklab Setam. Whosoever would practise it should recite the *fatihah* first and give a present to its owner.

"A beginning should be made on Thursday night and the charm should be continued until the night of the following Thursday.

"It should be recited four times a night with a sincere vowing of the heart to unity with Allah and the vision of Him implanted in one's heart, until His Being permeates one and one has faith: 'I am lost in the universal and absolute Essence of God;' and one is lost to self and one's self becomes absolute and universal too:—

"In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate. Oh God! grant peace to our lord Muhammad and the household of Muhammad who watcheth over my self and my friends and all my children and all the contents of my house and my property and the possessions of my hands with a sevenfold fortress from the fortress of God Most High; its roof—'There is no God but God,' and my wall 'Muhammad the Apostle of God,' and my key 'the might of God,' which may not be opened for ever save with His permission. Muhammad is like man and unlike man; he is like a chrysolite among stones.

"Now the import of the term 'fortress' is that we know that we come from not-being and to not-being shall return. For there is nothing evidently save the Being of God. And of a surety the Being of God never parts from His absolute essence, which carries out all His will, according to His word: 'His desire is accomplished by Himself and goes forth to no other than Himself save to not-being.'

"The intention of the term self is 'spirit,' one of the attributes of the knowledge of God Most High, which parts not from His essence and it becomes an objectified idea and is called man. Now the spirit is distinct and determined. Always the spirit yearns towards God.

"The intention of 'the house' is the body. The body is the place of the spirit and so the veritable place that reveals the Real God according to the saying of the Prophet, on whom be the peace of God: 'Whosoever knows himself, knows his Lord.' The house was built of itself and though it will pass away, yet He whose house it is is the Reality who with His absolute essence is eternal.

"The intention of our 'property' is the liver and heart and lungs and gall and all that God Most High has created: according to His word:—'There is no strength in any one save the strength of Allah, lord of all the worlds both as regards things revealed and things hidden.'

"The intention of our 'possessions' is the ten senses, firstly the outward and secondly the inner. The outward are five: the sight of the eyes, the hearing of the ears, the taste of the tongue, the smelling of the nose and the touch of the hand. The inner also are five: consciousness, faith, insight, perception and judgment.

"The intention of the sevenfold 'fortress' is the creation by God Most High of man with seven attributes: life, knowledge,

power, will, hearing, sight and speech. And seven parts of the body must be bowed to God in prayer: the forehead, the palms of the hands, the knees and the toes of the feet.

“The intention of the ‘key’ is because we have utter trust and union by surrendering ourselves to God Most High, according to His word: ‘Hold yourselves fast to the cord of God which breaks not neither is there concealment of His will from mystical knowledge;’ as said the Prophet on whom be God’s peace:—‘Nothing at all moves save by permission of Allah.’ For we cannot behold aught if the cord break and it cannot break save by the will of God Most High, and there is no other can break it.

“And the intention of the ‘key’ is Muhammad Apostle of God for God is utterly hidden; none other save himself knoweth Him, for He cherisheth His glory. And the Reality of God Most High was revealed to the spirit of Muhammad our Prophet and from that Spirit God Most High created all this universe, and all the attributes of His secret wisdom were revealed: and so it is that Muhammad is called the ‘key,’ because he opened the treasure-house that was hidden, according to His word:—‘I opened that which was closed.’

“And the intention of the protection of God is according to His word: ‘God Most High is with thee wheresoever thou art,’ according to His word: ‘God is nearer to thee than the muscles of thy neck.’

“And the intention of ‘roof’ is the power of God to cover any of His servants with mercy according to His will, so that he be locked away from all enemies and danger in this world and the next, neither shall the lock be opened by genie or man save with the permission of God Most High.”

Was it some such charm as this that Sultan Ahmad of old Malacca was expecting to learn from the Makhdum, whom he took on his elephant into battle against the Portuguese and who cried clutching the howdah with both hands, “Sultan! This is no place to study the Unity of God. Let us return.” (*Sējarah Mēlayu*. Chapter 34). In chapter 20 of the *Sējarah Mēlayu* we have a reference to a Meccan, Maulana Abu Ishak a mystic (*fahan pada ilmu tasawwuf*) practising austerities, the author of a work the *Dar al-mathlum*, who despatched a pupil Abu Bakar to Malacca to teach the doctrine of Essence and Attributes and Works contained in his book. Sultan Mansur Shah got a Pasai pundit to translate it. All the notabilities of Malacca became pupils of the Meccan and even the Kathi sat at his feet after he had seen the newcomer with a halo of light about him. Then Sultan Mansur Shah offered a present of gold and two female slaves to any Pasai theologian who could solve the problems whether those in heaven and those in hell remain in their respective places for ever. A Pasai pundit replied openly that they did, quoting the authority of the Koran. But the Sultan of Pasai summoned him, hinted that an embassy could not

have come from Malacca in quest of such an obvious answer and suggested giving in private a deeper esoteric meaning communicable, like all Sufi mysteries, only to the elect. The pundit took the hint and won the prize offered by Malacca. His esoteric solution is not recorded but al-Jili has given apposite Sufi answers:—"The powers of endurance of the sufferers in hell continues to grow—God never takes back his gifts and these powers come from God—until there appears in them a Divine power which extinguishes the fire, because no one is doomed to misery after the Divine attributes become manifest in him," or again " You may say, if you like, that Hell-fire remains as it was, but that the torment of the damned is changed to pleasure." (Nicholson, *op. cit.* pp. 136-7).

There is a record of one flagrant example of heterodox pantheism from Perak 30 years ago. Its exponent was sentenced to gaol. The creed he taught found God in man : " There is no God but God. I am God." (*La ilaha illa'llah! Aku Allah! Allah ia aku! Allahu aku! Allah ta'ala itu tiada mĕlainkan diri ini Allah.*) The creed, alms, the pilgrimage, the turban, the sixteen pillars of a mosque, the steps of its pulpit, the holding of a staff by the preacher, the kissing of the Black Stone at Mecca were all ascribed to disgusting sexual analogies. Not 44 but 40 members are required for the congregation of a mosque because man and woman together have 40 fingers and toes. Hell is anger and heaven sexual love. The Angel of Death is a man's eyes; the seven furnaces of Hell his knees; the bridge across the Fire his back-bone. One's right eye is Kiramun and one's left Katibin. And so on, a rigmarole of nonsense and an obscene travesty at an immeasurable distance of the Divine Love celebrated by the mystics of Persia.

The Malay Charm.

" Fasal pada menyatakan 'ilmu kota tauhid yang di-amalkan oleh Tuan Maklab Setam (مکلب ستم) . Dan barang siapa hendak mengamalkan dia, maka di-bacha fatihah dahulu, di-hadiahkan kepada yang empunya dia.

Maka di-mulaï kapada malam Jumaat hingga sampai kapada malam Jumaat pula ; maka di-bacha-nya empat kali pada sa-malam serta di-nadzarkan hati kita bersunggoh-sunggoh kita mengesakan kapada Allah serta di-shuhudkan masok ka-dalam fuad kita, sa-hingga pénoloh maujud di-dalam diri kita pun di-'itikadkan-lah : ' Aku ghaib di-dalam dzat mutlak dan itlak,' maka fana-lah diri kita sa-kali mĕlainkan diri mutlak dan itlak itu juga.

اللهم صلی علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آل محمد حوطت علی نفسي ورفني
وابنافي واهلي ومالي وماملک يدي سبع دورمن دورالله تعالى سقفها
لا اله الا الله ودرقها محمد رسول الله وقلعها قدرة الله لا يفتح ابدا
باذن الله محمد بشر لات البصر بل هو كالقيوت بين الحجر .

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘kota’ itu, tělah kita kětahuï asal kita itu daripada ‘adam, mělainkan kěmbali kapada ‘adam pula kita. Ada pun yang ada nyata-nya itu hanya ujud Allah jua sa-mata-mata-nya. Bahawa akan ujud Allah itu sa-kali-kali tiada běrčhěrai děngan dzat-nya yang mutlak itu bagi dzat-nya; maka ia-itu-lah yang mělakukan barang-barang kěhěndak-nya sapěrti firman-nya، فعال لما يريد: hěrti-nya ‘Běrlaku barang kěhěndak-nya di-atas diri-nya jua,’ tiada běrkěhěndak kapada yang lain-nya daripada-nya itu, sa-sunggoh-nya pun kapada ‘adam jua. Tamat.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘diri’ itu roh nama-nya, suatu sifat daripada Allah ta‘ala, tiada běrčhěrai děngan dzat-nya; dan ia-lah jadi suatu hakikat-nya, maka di-namaï ‘insan.’ Ada pun roh itu mufassil lagi mukaiyad. Bahawa sa-nya roh itu běrkěhěndak sěntiasa kapada Tuhan-nya. Tamat.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘rumah’ itu jasad nama-nya. Ada pun jasad itu těmpat (?) رکنأ roh itu, kěrana itulah sa-běnar-běnar-nya těmpat kěnyataan Hakku’llah ta‘ala, sapěrti sabda Nabi salla’llahu ‘alaihi wa-sallama: ‘Man ‘arafa nafsahu fakad ‘araf rabbahu,’ hěrti-nya, ‘Barang siapa měngěnal diri-nya, maka bahawa sa-nya měngěnal-lah Tuhan-nya.’ Ada pun rumah itu di-jadi sěndiri-nya, sunggoh pun akan fana mělainkan ēmpunya rumah-nya Hak yang kěkal děngan dzat-nya yang mutlak itu.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘harta’ kita itu ia-itu sapěrti hati dan jantong dan paru-paru dan hěmpědu dan barang yang di-jadikan Allah ta‘ala sa-mata-mata-nya sapěrti firman-nya:

وَمَا شَأْوْنَ إِلَّا إِنْ يَشْأَوْنَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ hěrti-nya, ‘Tiada kuasa orang jua mělainkan děngan kuasa Allah kapada sakalian ‘ālam ini daripada dzahir-nya dan batin-nya.’ Tamat.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘milek’ pada kita itu pancha inděra yang sa-puloh itu, pěrtama-nya dzahir, kědua-nya batin. Ada pun yang dzahir itu lima pěrkara: pěnglihatan mata, pěněngaran tělinga, pěrasaan lidah, pěnchrom děngan hidong, pěnjabat děngan tangan. Ada pun pancha inděra yang batin itu lima pěrkara pula: sir, ‘itikad, chita, rasa dan waham.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada tujoh ‘kota’ itu, kěrana Allah ta‘ala měnjadikan kita ini tujoh sifat, maka di-sěmpurnakan insan itu tujoh sifat: sifat hayat, ‘ilmu, kudrat, iradat, sama’, basar, kalam. Dan wajib sujud kapada Allah ta‘ala tujoh anggota: pěrtama-nya dahi, kědua-nya tapak tangan, dan kětiga-nya lutut, dan kěempat-nya kaki děngan pěrut-nya jari.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada ‘kunchi’ itu sěbab-nya sangat-sangat yakin kita dan tauhid kita pada měnyěrahkan diri kita kapada Allah ta‘ala, sapěrti firman-nya: وَعَصَمَ حَبْلَ اللَّهِ، hěrti-nya, ‘Běrpěgang kamu děngan tali Allah yang tiada putus-nya lagi tiada těrlindong barang sa-kěhěndak-nya itu

وَعَصَمَ حَبْلَ اللَّهِ، hěrti-nya, ‘Běrpěgang kamu děngan tali Allah yang tiada putus-nya lagi tiada těrlindong barang sa-kěhěndak-nya itu

daripada ma'rifat-nya,' saperti kata Nabi salla'llahu 'alaihi wasallama: 'La takhriku dzarratin illa bi-idzni'llah,' herti-nya, 'Tidak bergeger barang suatu jua pun, mlainkan dengan idzin Allah? Kérana tiada dapat di-pandang dengan memutuskan dan tiada putuskan mlainkan dengan kéhendak Allah sa-mata-mata, maka tiada dapat lain-nya. Tamat.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada 'anak kunchi' itu Muhammad Rasulu'llah. Kérana Allah itu sangat-lah terbunyi, tiada siapa mengétahuinya akan dia mlainkan pada diri-nya. Sëbab itu-lah Allah ta'ala memeliharkan këbésaran-nya itu, maka Hakkullah ta'ala pun tajalli kapada roh Nabi kita Muhammad, maka roh itu-lah Allah ta'ala menjadikan sakalian 'alam ini; maka dzahir-lah sakalian-nya sifat 'ilmu-nya yang batin itu. Maka sëbab itu-lah di-katakan 'anak kunchi,' kérna membukakan perbendaharaan yang terbunyi, saperti firman-nya: **كنت مخافيان**: herti-nya, 'Ada aku berlharta yang terbunyi-nya.' Tamat.

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada pélihara Allah saperti firman-nya: **وهو معكم انسا كتم** herti-nya, 'Allah ta'ala itu serta kamu barang di-manu kamu,' saperti firman-nya: 'Allah tèrlébeh hampir daripada urat lher.'

Shahadan ada pun murad daripada 'atap' itu kuasa Allah atas barang yang di-kéhendaki-nya pada menudong daripada seorang hamba dengan rahmat; maka jadi-lah terkuchi daripada sakalian seteru-nya dan bala-nya daripada dunia akhirat; maka tiada-lah terbuka kapada sakalian jin dan manusia mlainkan dengan izin Allah ta'ala. Tamat.

